

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 698

Commemorating the 200th anniversary of Congressional Cemetery.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 1, 2007

Mr. WALSH of New York (for himself and Mr. FARR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 200th anniversary of Congressional Cemetery.

Whereas 2007 is the 200th anniversary of the founding of Congressional Cemetery;

Whereas Congressional Cemetery, first called the Washington Parish Burial Ground, was founded in 1807 near the banks of the Anacostia River in the District of Columbia and served the new federal city and a young America as its first unofficial national cemetery, predating Arlington National Cemetery by 70 years;

Whereas Congress was the primary developer of the cemetery through appropriations for road grading, fencing, building of the Public Vault and its Slate Path, and construction of the original Gatehouse, and Congress ultimately

attached its name to the burial ground as early as the 1830's, referring to it as Congressional Cemetery;

Whereas within months of the establishment of the cemetery, the first burial of a Member of Congress took place when Senator Uriah Tracey (CT) died in Washington on July 19, 1807, and was interred the following day;

Whereas there are 19 Senators and 71 Representatives interred at Congressional Cemetery, and its cenotaphs, designed by second Architect of the Capitol Benjamin Latrobe, mark 165 sites to honor Members of Congress who died in office;

Whereas Congressional Cemetery holds more than 55,000 individuals in 30,000 burial sites marked by 14,000 headstones;

Whereas among those who have been buried at Congressional Cemetery are Vice Presidents George Clinton and Elbridge Gerry; Tobias Lear, personal secretary to George Washington; Commodore Thomas Tingey, first commandant of the Washington Navy Yard; William Wirt and William Pinckney, Attorneys General of the United States; Generals Jacob J. Brown and Alexander Macomb of the U.S. Army; General Archibald Henderson, longest-serving Commandant of the Marine Corps; Dr. William Thornton, who originally designed the United States Capitol and was the first Architect of the Capitol; George Watterston, third Librarian of Congress; Robert Mills, architect of the Washington Monument, the Department of Treasury Building, the Old Post Office, and the original U.S. Patent Office Building (current home of the National Museum of American Art and National Portrait Gallery); Philip P. Barbour, Speaker of the House of

Representatives and Associate Justice of the Supreme Court; and 10 mayors of the City of Washington;

Whereas several prominent Native Americans who died while in Washington were buried at Congressional Cemetery, including Push-Ma-Ta-Ha, Chief of the Choctaws and a Brigadier General of the U.S. Army, and Kan Ya Tu Duta (or Scarlet Crow), a delegate of the Dakota Sioux;

Whereas among other significant figures in American history who are interred at Congressional Cemetery are Belva Lockwood, the first woman to practice law before the Supreme Court; conductor and composer John Philip Sousa; Adelaide Johnson, suffragette and sculptor of the “Portrait Monument” to Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony in the Rotunda of the Capitol; Civil War photographer Matthew Brady; silent film star Mary Fuller; and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover;

Whereas the Congressional Cemetery was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 23, 1969;

Whereas the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Congressional Cemetery one of the 11 most endangered historical sites in America on June 16, 1997;

Whereas for over 30 years the cemetery has been managed by the nonprofit Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery, whose mission is to preserve, interpret, and honor this national treasure, significant District of Columbia landmark, and unique Capitol Hill asset; and

Whereas by working with community volunteers such as the Congressional Cemetery Dogwalkers Club, as well as with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Park Service, the Navy, and the Joint Military District of

Washington, the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery has made significant improvements to the cemetery: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That on the 200th anniversary of the found-
- 2 ing of Congressional Cemetery, the House of Representa-
- 3 tives recognizes and honors the cultural and historical im-
- 4 portance of Congressional Cemetery and the value of pro-
- 5 tecting and restoring this national treasure.

